Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

AN EMENDATION OF VITRUVIUS

By C. A. R. Sanborn

IN our printed text of Vitruvius, 2, 1, 1 (33, 24 Rose), the word *aliter* seems to be used in a sense that is, so far as I am aware, without precise parallel in any other passage of Latin. The second book, in which this unique use of *aliter* occurs, is chiefly occupied with a description of various kinds of building materials, and is prefaced by an introduction which treats the origin of building, and which sketches briefly the development of civilization among mankind through the discovery of fire and of language.

It is on this last point, that is, the discovery and development of language, that we must fix our attention, as my proposed solution of the difficulty in connection with the word *aliter* depends for its support in some measure on the theory which Vitruvius held in regard to this particular subject. Did he ascribe the development of speech to θέσις or to φύσις? An answer to this question may be found by examining the author's words. After stating that primaeval men at first lived like wild beasts in woods and caves, and fed on such food as came to hand, he describes the creation of fire by the friction of forest branches agitated by the wind. He then goes on to say, *et eo flamma vehementi perterriti qui circa eum locum fuerunt sunt fugati. post ea requieta propius accedentes cum animadvertissent commoditatem esse magnam corporibus ad ignis teporem, ligna adicientes et ita conservantes alios adducebant et nutu monstrantes ostendebant quas haberent ex eo utilitates. in eo hominum congressu cum profundebantur aliter e*[1] *spiritu voces, cotidiana consuetudine vocabula ut obtigerant constituerunt, deinde significando res saepius in usu ex eventu fari fortuito coeperunt et ita sermones inter se procreaverunt.*

This may be translated as follows: "and so, thoroughly frightened by the violent flame, those who were about the place fled away. After the blaze had subsided and they had drawn near and perceived how great a comfort to their bodies was the warmth near the fire, they threw on logs and in this way kept the fire burning. Then they brought other men to it and made known by mute gestures what advantages they derived from fire. In this gathering of human beings, since sounds were emitted from the breath in different ways, men by daily use established names for objects just as they had hit upon them. Finally, by indicating things oftenest in use (by the same word) they began to speak, quite by chance, and thus created language."

---

[1] Rose in both his editions omits the word *e*. The MSS., however, have *aliter espiritu*, and *e spiritu* is the preferable reading.

It is apparent, then, that Vitruvius does not regard language from a pragmatic point of view, as something which man deliberately preconceived as advantageous, and then adopted, but he regards it rather as a growth, attributable to natural development. This is the well-known Epicurean doctrine of the natural inception of language. As Proclus, in his commentary to the Platonic Cratylus (p. 9, ed. Boissonade), states: ὁ γὰρ Ἐπίκουρος ἔλεγεν ὅτι οὐχὶ ἐπιστημόνως οὗτοι ἔθεντο τὰ ὀνόματα, ἀλλὰ φυσικῶς.

Now Lucretius, we know, accepted this doctrine and has given it expression in Book V of the *De Rerum Natura*, where he traces the development of civilization. Especially to be noted are verses 1028–1029:

At varios linguae sonitus natura subegit
mittere et utilitas expressit nomina rerum.

Vitruvius and Lucretius show numerous striking parallels of expression in their account of man's growth from savagery to culture. These parallels have been collected and discussed by Merrill in an article *On the Influence of Lucretius on Vitruvius* (*Am. Phil. Ass'n*, XXXV, 1904, pp. xvi–xx). Merrill's conclusion is that Vitruvius and Lucretius at least used the same sources in their account, even if Vitruvius was not directly influenced by Lucretius.

With these facts in mind, namely, that both Vitruvius and Lucretius are stating the Epicurean doctrine of φύσις in relation to the growth of language, and that Vitruvius uses in his description many of the phrases employed by Lucretius, let us turn to the particular phrase of Vitruvius which offers difficulty. We observe that *aliter* here cannot be interpreted in its usual sense of "otherwise," but must be made to carry the weight of some such meaning as "in different ways," "in ways differing from one another."

Vitruvius has, in the course of his treatise, employed *aliter* fifteen times in its usual sense. In two other passages, besides the one at present under discussion, he has used the word in a sense that approaches the meaning which, if the traditional text is correct, it must be made to yield in the passage we are considering.

Of these two other apparently similar uses of *aliter*, the first appears at 14, 24. Vitruvius tells how the architect should vary his structures according to the means and social distinction of his patrons, *alter gradus erit distributionis, cum ad usum patrum familiarum aut ad pecuniae copiam aut ad eloquentiae dignitatem aedificia aliter disponentur.* And again, 218, 23, speaking of the variations in the construction of sundials, necessitated by difference of location, he says, *umbra gnomonis aequinoctialis alia magnitudine est Athenis alia Alexandriae aliae Romae non eadem Placentiae ceterisque orbis terrarum locis. itaque longe aliter distant descriptiones horologiorum locorum mutationibus.*

In the second of these passages all MSS. agree in reading *aliter;* in the first, *alte* stands in H S G, but *aliter* appears in L, is clearly required by the sense, and has been adopted by Rose in both editions. In each of these passages *aliter* has the meaning, "different from one another," but clearly neither passage is parallel to 33, 24; for in this case *aliter* has to bear the weight of the extended meaning unassisted, while in 14, 24, and in 218, 23, the preceding series of distributives, *alter, aut, aut,* in the one instance, *alia, alia, aliae* in the other, at once dispose of any ambiguity or oddity that might otherwise lurk in the *aliter* which follows. In each of these passages the use of *aliter*, with the meaning "in different ways," "in ways differing from one another," is justified by the distributive ideas previously expressed.

Two further citations of *aliter* are given by Morgan, *On the Language of Vitruvius* (*Proc. Am. Acad. of Arts and Sciences*, XLI, 1906, p. 481). The first, from Pomponius Mela, 1, 57, *multo aliter a ceteris agunt*, appears not to help us here; the second, from Seneca *Q. N.*, 4, praef. 22, is quoted as follows in the *Thesaurus*, p. 1656, 40: (*Sicilia*) *uno . . . tempore vidit Pompeium Lepidumque ex maximo fastigio aliter ad extrema deiectos, cum Pompeius alienum exercitum fugeret, Lepidus suum.* Here *aliter* does indeed have the meaning "in different ways," but it should be noted that in this instance, too, the distributive idea is already indicated by the *-que*, and that this use of *aliter* with *-que* is similar to that of *aliter et*, as the *Thesaurus* implies.[1]

There is, then, apparently no authority either of Vitruvian usage or of usage found in late authors which can justify the *aliter* of 33, 24. The difficulty has long been felt, and some emendations have been suggested. Nohl (*Archiv f. Lat. Lex.*, II, 1885, p. 490) suggests *obiter*, and compares *ut obtigerant* below. Degering (*Berl. Phil. Woch.*, 1907, XXVII, p. 1567) supposes some early manuscript to have read *halitu et spiritu*. He imagines the first letter of *halitu* to have been indicated by the sign ⊢ = H written above the word. In the copying, he thinks that this sign was omitted, and that the resulting form *alitu*, being unintelligible, was changed by a later copyist to *aliter*, that *et* became *e*, and that the phrase then read, *aliter espiritu*, as in all our MSS. Degering's emendation (*halitu et spiritu*) is adopted, as usual without any warning that it is an emendation, by the editors of the *Thesaurus*, and for this reason they do not cite the use of *aliter* in 33, 24.

The passage is undeniably corrupt, as Nohl and Degering both indicate, but their emendations do more violence to the actual reading of the text as it stands in the MSS. than does one which has occurred to me, namely, the change of *aliter* to *naturaliter*. The letters N, A, T, U, R, are all found in the ending of the word *profundebantur*, where, however, the A precedes the N. If, in some early manuscript, the letters *natur* stood at the end of a line, and the letters *aliter* at the beginning of the next line below, confusion might easily arise in a copy of that manuscript by the scribe's mistaking the ending *-aliter* for a word in itself, and the letters *natur* for the ending of a verb in the passive voice.

---

[1] Editions of Seneca *Q. N.* read in 4 praef. 22, *aliter aliterque;* Gercke, however, who made the extracts from Seneca for the *Thesaurus*, in a letter to Hey (cf. *Archiv f. Lat. Lex.* XV, 1907, p. 289) states that this reading is found only in codex E (*Berolinensis Erfurtanus*). The appearance of this reading there, as well as in modern printed texts, is doubtless due to the fact that the disjunctive force of the *-que* in *Lepidumque* was not fully appreciated. Fickert, in his edition of Seneca (Leipzig, 1845), reports the reading *aliter aliterque* as appearing in *two* MSS., E and e; while in a single manuscript (G) the reading *aliterque* is found; this latter was the reading adopted for the Bipontine editions of 1782 and 1809, and in Koeler's edition of the *Q. N.*, 1819, as Fickert reports.

This brings us to a consideration of the verb in this passage. Did Vitruvius write *profundebantur* or *profundebant?* The latter, probably, for the corruption of *profundebantur naturaliter* into *profundebantur aliter* seems less simple than does the corruption of *profundebant naturaliter* into this phrase. Moreover, by retaining the verb in the active voice the same subject, "primaeval men," is kept throughout the entire passage as the subject of the successive verbs.

Hence, according to the emendation which I propose, the sentence reads, *in eo hominum congressu cum profundebant naturaliter e spiritu voces, cotidiana consuetudine vocabula ut obtigerant constituerunt,* and the sense will be, "in this gathering of human beings, since they were in the habit of emitting sounds naturally from the breath, they established names for objects, just as they had hit upon them."

Finally, it may be urged that *naturaliter* emphasizes the Epicurean theory of φύσις which Vitruvius is here quite evidently following and, at the same time, offers another parallel to the words of Lucretius already quoted:

> *At varios linguae sonitus natura subegit*
> *mittere.*

Vitruvius elsewhere employs *naturaliter* fifteen times.